

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MC-02 PM-04 DODE-00 EB-07 NRC-05

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R 061926Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9279

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SAN SALVADOR 4061

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, ES

SUBJECT: MUNITIONS CONTROL LICENSE APPLICATION FOR SALE OF
REVOLVERS TO UNIVERSITY

REF: STATE 228686

1. FOLLOWING ARE EMBASSY'S REPLIES TO QUESTIONS RAISED REFTEL
228686:

1A) IT IS EMBASSY'S UNDERSTANDING THAT REVOLVERS ARE TO BE
USED BY THE UNIVERSITY'S SECURITY DEPT.

1B) STATED PURPOSE OF THE REVOLVERS IS TO ARM UNIVERSITY
SECURITY FORCE.

1C) WITH REGARD TO THE PERTINENCE OF THIS SALE TO THE GENERALLY
TENSE UNIVERSITY SITUATION, WE ARE OF TWO MINDS. THE FIRST IS
THAT THE SAN SALVADOR CAMPUS OF THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY IS INDEED
A TINDER BOX SITUATION WHICH COULD GO OFF AT ANY TIME, AND THE
INTRODUCTION OF ADDITIONAL FIREPOWER, EVEN IN THE HANDS OF THE
CAMPUS POLICE, COULD PROVOKE RATHER THAN DIMINISH THE CHANCES
OF VIOLENCE. THE OTHER SIDE WOULD BE THAT THOSE WITH THE RESPON-
SIBILITY TO PROVIDE A MODICUM OF ORDER ON A TROUBLED CAMPUS,
PARTICULARLY WHERE THEY REPRESENT THE "ENEMY", SHOULD HAVE THE
MEANS TO PROTECT THEMSELVES AND UNIVERSITY PROPERTY.

THE QUESTION MIGHT COME DOWN TO WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE, AS
OPPOSED TO EXCESSIVE AND POSSIBLY PROVOCATIVE WEAPONRY. THE
CAMPUS POLICE FORCE AT THE UES HAS THIRTY MEN, WHO WORK THREE SHIFTS.
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EACH SHIFT APPARENTLY HAS TEN AGENTS. SOME PRESENTLY CARRY

SIDEARMS. SIXTY FIVE NEW PISTOLS SEEMS A LARGE NUMBER IF ONLY TEN MEN MUST CARRY ARMS AT ANY ONE TIME. IT IS POSSIBLE THE EXTRA WEAPONS, IF THERE ARE ANY, WOULD BE FOR OTHER USES, I.E., SUPPLY ARMS TO SOME OF THE MANY GOVERNMENT UNDERCOVER AGENTS ON THE CAMPUS, OR TO A NUMBER OF THE PROFESSORS WHO FEEL ENDANGERED BY STUDENT THREATS. THE ACTING RECTOR, THE APPARENT AUTHOR OF THE PURCHASE ORDER, IS THOUGHT BY THE STUDENTS AND MANY OF THE TEACHING STAFF TO BE A GOVERNMENT TOOL. HE SEES HIMSELF, AND THE FACULTY WHO SUPPORT HIM, AS VIRTUALLY UNDER SEIGE BY AGITATORS AND THEIR FOLLOWERS. HE IS KNOWN TO FAVOR GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION TO ASSURE DISCIPLINE ON CAMPUS.

ON BALANCE, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THE PURCHASE REQUEST, ALTHOUGH PERHAPS EXCESSIVE FOR THE UNIVERSITY'S NEEDS, IS NOT AT SUCH A MAGNITUDE TO WARRANT DENIAL OF THE EXPORT LICENCE. ANY FUTURE REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL WEAPONS DESTINED FOR THE UES SHOULD RPT SHOULD BE EXAMINED IN LIGHT OF THE DEVELOPING UNIVERSITY SITUATION.

2. EMBASSY HAS LEARNED THAT MINISTER OF DEFENSE HAS SIGNED THE NECESSARY DOCUMENTS APPROVING SUBJECT SALE.
CAMPBELL

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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